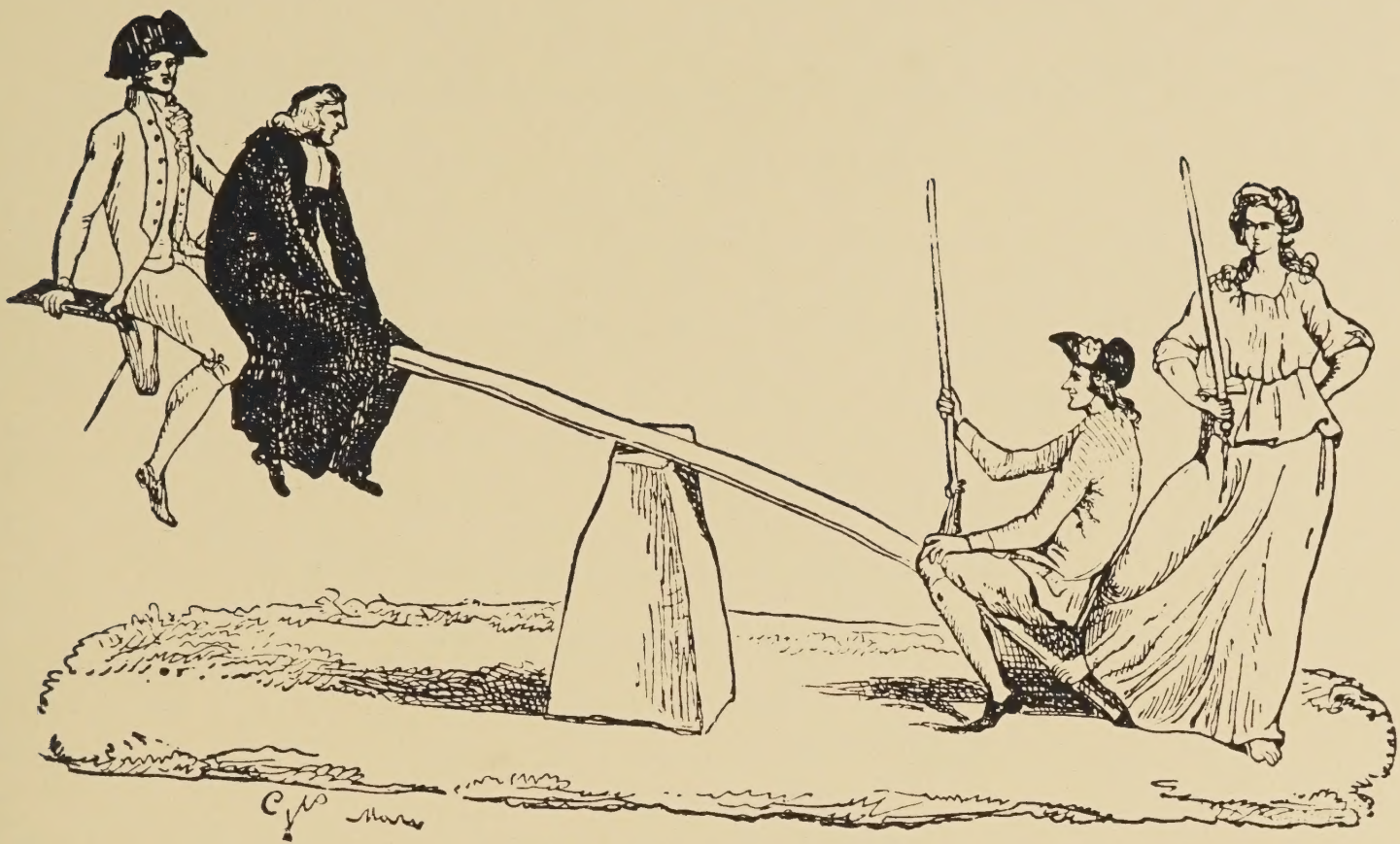




CETTE FOIS-CI LA JUSTICE EST DU COTÉ DU PLUS FORT.

1789

Année de la Liberté



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1789: Année de la Liberté

An exhibition of
books,
pamphlets,
plays
and other materials
relating to the first year of
the French Revolution

Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library
University of Toronto

May — August 1989

INTRODUCTION

The great turning point in modern European history was the 1789 Revolution in France which marked the emergence of political institutions designed to uphold the rights of man and the citizen. In Canada as in other countries there has been a keen interest in the study of the end of the Old Regime, that form of the monarchy which had presided over New as well as old France. The innovations enacted by the *Assemblée nationale constituante* (1789-1791) were followed by the Terror (1793-1794), and in due course, by the coronation of Napoleon as Emperor of France in 1804, but they also brought a message of political freedom to the modern world.

At the University of Toronto there are many rare publications which are a valuable scholarly resource for researchers into different aspects of those years. One specialist has pointed out that, memoirs and letters aside, the three principal sources of public opinion in the French Revolution were the statements of grievances drawn up in 1789 called *cahiers de doléances*, the periodical press, and the pamphlets which were widely published, but that the relative neglect of pamphlet literature resulted from the difficulty of establishing a corpus from which to work.¹

The collection in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library is drawn from several sources and contains material not found in a number of leading libraries with special interest in the French Revolution. The bulk of the pamphlets was bought in Paris in August, 1922, by the Chief Librarian, Hugh Hornby Langton. During a sabbatical stay Langton had authorisation to purchase French materials to help replenish the library's holdings which had been so badly damaged by the great fire of 1890. He wrote to W.S. Wallace, "On the French Revolution I found a good deal of material in three shops chiefly, and much of it is inexpensive."² Almost forty years later the University bought the extensive collection of J. S. Will, Professor of French, which included one hundred and thirteen pamphlets. Other gifts, purchases and exchanges over the years further added to the holdings. The total in 1989 is now more than twelve hundred with a particularly strong representation for 1789 with 199 titles.³

1 Harvey Chiswick, "Pamphlets and journalism in the early French Revolution: the offices of the *Ami du Roi* of the abbé Royou as a center of royalist propaganda", *French historical studies*, vol. XV, no. 4, Fall 1988, p. 623-624.

2 University of Toronto Archives. A68-0001, Office of the Chief Librarian. Letters received, 1922: Langton correspondence.

3 All these details and calculations were brought together by Mr. Yves Anderson, formerly a history student at the University of Toronto. I am also indebted for his enthusiastic work in preparing a summary check-list of the holdings.

In due course the stormy progress of the Revolution brought priests and aristocrats to Canada from France, such as the duc de la Rochefoucault-Liancourt who had dinner with Governor Simcoe in a tent previously the property of Captain Cook, and comte Joseph de Puisaye, whose house is still to be seen in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The pamphlets are conspicuously lacking in the decoration which delight the bibliophile. The absence of fine detail, however, reminds us of the urgency of the political discussion that they represented. They were part of a national debate. Some are smudged with the inky fingerprints of the workers who snatched up the sheets from the press so that the message they carried could be brought to a public avid for news. What kind of reforms were needed in France? Why was the government out of funds? What did the privileged orders feel about the changes being made? What was happening? These were the kinds of questions that drove the authors and printers to unprecedented efforts. The exhibit is organised thematically to show something of the search for a new and better France in that year of liberty, 1789.

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CASE ONE: THE YEARS LEADING TO THE REVOLUTION

Scholars continue to debate the influence of the Enlightenment, the eighteenth-century formulation of ideas about man in society, on the coming of the French Revolution. For later critics of the French Revolution it was "The fault of Voltaire, the fault of Rousseau!" Whatever one's viewpoint on that contention, certainly the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and many others known as *philosophes*, did much to effect the terms of political discussion which took place in the years immediately prior to the Revolution. This can be seen in some of the pamphlets of 1787 and 1788.

Honoré-Gabriel de Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791). *Lettres du comte de Mirabeau, sur l'administration de M. Necker*. [Paris?] 1787.

This pre-revolutionary pamphlet by the great orator and leading figure of the National Assembly criticised the "fanatic partisans" of the Swiss financier, Jacques Necker. Necker had put forward various budget proposals which were designed to alleviate the chronic government deficits, proposals which still enjoyed wide support in 1787. Mirabeau here launches a sharp attack on "les fautes énormes de l'administration de M. Necker" (p. 4).

Louis-Henri-Marthe de Gouy d'Arsy, marquis (1753-1794). *Mémoire au roi en faveur de la noblesse française*, rédigé et signé par un patricien, ami du peuple. [S.l.] 1788.

The first major pamphlet by Gouy d'Arsy who would be a deputy for Saint Domingue (today Haiti) at the National Assembly. Like Mirabeau he published comments on Necker's reforms, and, in 1792, a call for repossession of the sugar colony of Saint Domingue. He was a prolific author of pamphlets from 1788 to 1791. In the opening lines words for nobility, patrician, people and citizens mix sympathies and notions as he claims the existence of only two Orders in France, those of Patricians and Plebians. He attacks the Roman Catholic clergy for its celibacy which causes it to lack sympathy with the fecund mass of the nation.

Lettre des avocats au parlement de Toulouse, à Monseigneur le garde des Sceaux, sur les nouveaux Édits transcrits par les commissaires de Sa Majesté dans les registres du Parlement, le 8 mai 1788. [Toulouse?] 1788.

This pamphlet is representative of the important place in public debate played by the officials of the high courts (*parlements*) in France, and in this case by the barristers of the *parlement* of Toulouse, in southwestern France, the second oldest in the kingdom. Arguing from historical precedent they reject innovations which would reduce the inviolable right of the city of Toulouse to have a *parlement* which protects local privileges. The *parlements*, like the order of barristers, were abolished in 1790. Among signatories to this pamphlet are various individuals (Malpel, Mailhe) who played a prominent part in subsequent radical politics in the region.

*Régénération de la France par les États généraux, par M***, Avocat en Parlement. [S.l.] 1788.*

The introduction is dated 15 October 1788 and addresses the Notables convoked for November 1788, insisting that the precedent of the last Estates General held in France, that of 1614, is quite inadequate for the situation existing in the late eighteenth century. This is an example of the participation of barristers and members of the legal profession in the discussions prior to the meeting of the Estates General in May 1789.

Joseph Charon. *Lettre, ou, Mémoire historique sur les troubles populaires de Paris, en août et septembre 1788, avec des notes. Londres, 1788.*

This pamphlet like others of the time expressed fear of public disorder and violence interfering with the course of reform, in this case brought about by the retirement of Loménie de Brienne. Here Charon criticises the commander of the Paris police, or watch (*guet à pied; guet à cheval*), Dubois, whose orders resulted in injuries and deaths in the last days of August, 1788. The concern with popular violence would show itself to be prophetic in light of the revolutionary *journées* (decisive days) of which the most famous was the attack on the Bastille prison on 14 July 1789.

Arresté du parlement du 5 décembre 1788, les pairs y séant, sur la situation actuelle de la nation. [Paris, 1788]

Mémoire sur la prochaine tenue des États-généraux, et sur les objets qui doivent y être mis en délibération, par M.D.L.C. A Villefranche, et se trouve à Paris: Chez les marchands de nouveautés [sic], 1788.

The statement by the Parlement de Paris was an effort to regain popularity, lost when it opted for the organisation of the coming Estates General according to the forms of 1614. It repeated that the convocation should be by legal jurisdictions (*baillages* and *sénéchaussées*) rather than by military ones, (as put forward in the *Mémoire*), or by the administrative limits of *généralités*. The court entrusts the vital decision of the number of deputies for each order to the wisdom of King Louis XVI. By the end of 1788, however, the *parlements* were already discredited in public opinion.

CASE TWO: CALLS FOR REFORM

Avenir heureux du commerce françois, dédié aux fabriques nationales. [S.l.] 1789.

The author, R..... patriote, claims that prosperity will result from a "buy French" policy rather than from purchasing foreign goods. It singles out the English as guilty of unfair trade practices, and calls for the Swiss to be replaced as suppliers of silks, and India to be replaced as the supplier of *mousselines*. The pamphlet also attacks peddlars, and the holding of the traditional fairs, and calls for a distinction to be made among those bankrupt because of misfortune, incompetence, or fraud.

Dénonciation d'un Languedocien à sa province. Toulouse, 1789.

A personal response to the call for *cahiers de doléances* by a *noble d'épée*. The author denounces legal officials who have the right to take a title of nobility (as a result of holding a position for which they have paid) on the grounds that this debases the nobility, previously the reward for merit. Furthermore he is vehement in accusing the local *parlement* of placing the chains of feudalism on the people, and calls for the future Estates General to declare the Toulouse court an enemy of the Motherland. This pamphlet thus reveals the lack of cohesion among the privileged groups in French society.

Discours sur la nécessité de réunir & former, en corps d'états, l'assemblée générale des représentans de l'Artois ... prononcé par un des membres de la noblesse, dans la première séance, le 20 avril 1789. [S.l., 1789]

This pamphlet calls upon the "nation" of Artois to constitute a unified body in order that the sixteen deputies from this area of northern France shall speak with an undivided voice at the Estates General of the Kingdom to be held in Versailles. France is described as being made up of "un composé de plusieurs aggrégations politiques, dont la réunion forme un grand corps, mais qui, considérées séparément, forment chacune un entier indivisible par son essence" (p. 9). The author saw his small region, which he calls a nation, as having a distinct existence within France.

Gabriel-Honoré de Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791). *Opinion du comte de Mirabeau sur le règlement donné par le Roi, pour l'exécution de ses Lettres de convocation aux prochains États-généraux, dans son comté de Provence. Aix: Chez Gibelin-David et Émeric-David, imprimeurs du Roi, 1789. Daté: "A Aix, 13 mars 1789."*

Another opinion about how to organise political representation in the period before the assembly of the Estates General. Mirabeau calls for a representative assembly for the Provençal nation which shall include the three orders together. He warns against efforts by the privileged classes - meaning the nobles and the clergy - to sabotage far-reaching reforms by the Estates General, and he calls upon his fellow *provençaux* to obey the King, seeing in the royal intention to address fundamental grievances the best avenue for effective reform.

[Charles Louis Huguet] (1754-1839). *Réflexions sur les pouvoirs et instructions à donner par les provinces à leurs députés aux États-généraux. 2^e éd. [S.l.] 1789.*

The second edition of a work by Huguet, son of a judge at the Paris *parlement*, who would later be made a comte by Napoleon and a marquis and peer by Louis XVIII with the name of his father's seigneurie, Sémonville. Huguet warns against "un nombre immense d'écrits incendiaires" (p. 4) scattered about by supporters of the ministers who are trying to pit the Third Estate against the nobles. He warns fellow members of the privileged First and Second Estates to end the mutual attacks (similar to those in other pamphlets in this case) which are destructive. He calls for the individual liberty of citizens and the establishment of regular pre-announced timetables for meetings of the future Estates General as priorities.

Cahier des plaintes et doléances de l'ordre de la noblesse du ressort de la gouvernance de Lille. Lille, et se trouve à Paris: Chez Devaux, 1789.

Nobles of the district of Lille in northern France express their grievances, and make a general call for a return to the antique constitution of the monarchy by which they meant the conditions before the rise of the absolutist monarchy. A number of more specific demands follow: they call for the suppression of all existing lotteries and want to disallow new ones since they are destructive of good morals. Another demand is that only Roman Catholics be admitted to public office. Another calls for an end of all enobling offices which are seen as degrading the nobility. (The same point is made by the southern noble who published his pamphlet in Toulouse, also in this case).

Cahier des doléances et réclamations des femmes. Par Madame B*** B***. [Paris?] 1789.

The coat of arms on the title page is crowned by the emblem of a marquis, and the text seems to be the work of a noblewoman. She writes "Ce n'est point aux honneurs du gouvernement, ni aux avantages d'être initiées dans les secrets du ministère que nous aspirons; mais nous croyons qu'il est de toute équité de permettre aux femmes, veuves ou filles possédant des terres ou autres propriétés, de porter leurs doléances au pied du trône; qu'il est également juste de recueillir leurs suffrages, puisqu'elles sont obligées, comme les hommes, de payer les impositions royales et de remplir les engagements du commerce" (p. 5). She denounces the customary laws of inheritance which favour the eldest male, and also calls for a reduction of the national debt, for the branding on the face of unscrupulous bankrupts, and for an end to regional privileges.

La Jérémiade des maîtres porte-faix et des autres mercenaires du triste état de la ville de Soissons. [Soissons? 1789]

This is a kind of mock *cahier* with a pun in the title: the Triste État (Sad Estate) instead of Tiers État (Third Estate). The master porters are upset because their electors were not admitted to an assembly as a result of the machinations of country lawyers and the relatives of the local governor. Written with incorrect grammar and errors in spelling to represent a lower-class "voice", this pamphlet is representative of a genre which will be much used in the Revolution. Over and above the jokes and sarcasm the author remarks on clerical and juridical abuses current in Soissons.

Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748-1836). *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers-État?* 3e éd. [Paris] 1789.

The most famous of all the many works published in France in 1789 before the Estates General met. The title is a rhetorical question, "What is the Third Estate?" To which the answer is that it is the non-privileged, and not the clergy or nobles, that forms the indispensable body of the nation. The author attacks those lay nobles and noble clerics who defended ancient legal prerogatives codified in the First and Second Estates in a way that blocked hopes for legal and juridical changes leading to an open ruling class in France. Sieyès would, twenty years later, be made a comte by Napoleon, but in this earlier work he expressed the resentment against the privileges of others which fuelled the political viewpoints of many Frenchmen in 1789.

[P.-M. Gendarme] *La prochaine assemblée des États-généraux et la régénération future de la France: ouvrage en vers, par un membre du Tiers-État.* [Paris] 1789.

This enthusiastic poem to salute the hopes for national regeneration was passed by the censor on 11 April 1789. It expressed in rather undistinguished doggerel the desire that the Estates General would end abuses and regenerate the "empire". Its inexpensive format and presentation shows the intent to make it available to a wide public.

CASE THREE: ORGANIZING THE ESTATES GENERAL

The "revolutionary" pamphlets of 1789 were not radical or cataclysmic in their programme. Nobody at the Estates General's convocation was calling for the end of the monarchy, the establishment of the republic, or the imposition of egalitarianism in speech and costume. On the other hand, for the first time, an extensive discussion was under way about the nuts-and-bolts of running a deliberative body which would represent clergy, nobles and the educated classes at a national level.

Lettre d'un avocat de Paris, ou, Modestes observations sur la troisième question traitée dans le rapport fait au Roi par le ministre de ses finances, touchant l'admission des nobles pour députés du Tiers-État dans l'Assemblée prochaine des États-généraux. Paris: Chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1789.

Dated 10 January, 1789 this pamphlet sought to stop the election of nobles as deputies for the Third Estate, saying that reason and good order require commoners to be deputies of the commons, and nobles of the nobility. In fact nobles would sit among the Third Estate as deputies: the comte de Mirabeau is the most famous example. This pamphlet attests to the resentment against nobles and the fear of their political skills.

[Lalourcé, Charlemagne] (b. 1751). *Forme générale et particulière de la convocation et de la tenue des Assemblées nationales ou États-généraux de France, justifiée par pièces authentiques.* Se trouve à Paris: Chez Barrois l'aîné, 1789.

This is the first part (and all that was published) of an elaborate discussion of historical precedents and procedures in the meeting of the Estates General. Nobody living in France in 1789, nor their fathers nor grandfathers, had any practical experience of how the Estates General had conducted its business in its last meeting in 1614. Hence the interest in details like this table showing how many deputies had appeared in 1576, 1588 and 1614.

De l'organisation d'un état monarchique, ou, Considérations sur les vices de la monarchie françoise, et sur la nécessité de lui donner une constitution. 2e éd. [S.l.] 1789.

This work expresses hostility to the hold on state machinery by the nobles, and exhorts them to join together with "the nation" for the greater good of all. It also expresses the desire for a formal constitution rather than the theory of the "Antique Constitution" which was made up of precedents and traditions and which did not exist as a single, specific text.

Qui faut-il élire? ou, Conseils au peuple sur le choix de ses députés aux États-généraux.
[Paris] mars 1789.

This anonymous pamphlet is intended to warn the public against the partisans of Calonne's reforms, and to support those of Jacques Necker. It can be seen as one of the early efforts designed to affect elections for a representative body at the national level.

Règlement fait par le roi, en interprétation & exécution de celui du 28 mars dernier, concernant la convocation des trois États de la ville de Paris, du 13 avril 1789.
Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1789.

In the months before the actual convocation various technicalities of calling a representative assembly were clarified. This government pamphlet deals with the election of Paris deputies.

De la meilleure maniere de délibérer et de voter dans une grande assemblée. [S.l.] 1789.

This pamphlet, possibly by a deputy from the Caen *baillage*, called de Launey, is an individual contribution to discussion about how the Estates General should conduct itself. It calls for limits on the number of speakers and a standing vote (up = yes, seated = no) where all the deputies are visible to each other in a hemicycle.

Abbé de Gourcy. *Des droits et des devoirs du citoyen dans les circonstances présentes, avec un jugement impartial sur l'ouvrage de M. l'abbé de Mably, par un citoyen ami des trois ordres.* [Paris] 1789.

This work was approved by the censor on 10 July 1789, four days before the fall of the Bastille, and it starts with an attack on the "fanatisme de la liberté" of the abbé de Mably (1709-1785) in his book, *Des droits et des devoirs du citoyen*, editions of which were published in 1783 and 1789. Gourcy approves of deliberation by order rather than in common, and was also severe on moral laxity in France. He regrets the innumerable writings which have pitted the three orders against each other, and calls for doubling the representation of the Third Estate. A manuscript note in an eighteenth century hand says "cet ouvrage subtilement sophistiqué est d'un partisan indiscret et contradictoire de la funeste aristocratie".

CASE FOUR: THE PRIVILEGED

Paul Joseph de Barthez (1734-1806). *Libre discours sur la prérogative que doit avoir la noblesse dans la constitution, et dans les États-généraux de la France*. Paris, 1789.

An argument similar to that of Montesquieu's is advanced on the utility of the "prerogatives" of the nobility (rather than the word "privileges") in all tempered monarchies as a protection against an arbitrary government. The author claims that it is beyond doubt that the nobility has always had the right to deliberate separately from other deputies in what are called National Assemblies.

Charles-Philippe Ronsin (1752-1794). *La ligue aristocratique, ou, Les catilinaires françoises, par un membre du comité patriotique du caveau*. [Paris]: Imprimerie de Josseran, 1789.

This pamphlet contains a number of scabrous attacks on the aristocracy as well as accusations that different courtiers had fathered the children of Marie Antoinette, rather than her husband, Louis XVI. Such scandalous sexual canards were often made at the time. The pamphlet was published after the month of August 1789.

[Nicolas-Marie-Félix Bodard de Tezay] (1757-1823). *Les trois ordres en voyage*. [Paris?] 1789.

This pamphlet is written in the form of a dialogue between characters from different sections of French society, representing the hopes for social harmony as well as reforms.

A toute la noblesse, dont je suis membre. [Paris?] avril 1789.

The anonymous author of this pamphlet, who claims to be a noble himself, takes the opposite position from that of Paul-Joseph de Barthez, and calls for the nobility to vote in the Estates General by head, together with deputies of the Third Estate. He reiterates the need for the existence of a nobility in France.

Confession générale de Son Altesse Sérénissime Mgr. le comte d'Artois, déposée à son arrivée à Madrid, dans le sein du T.R.P. dom Jérôme, Grand Inquisiteur, & rendu publique par les ordres de Son Altesse, pour donner à la nation un témoignage authentique de son repentir. Paris: Chez le secrétaire des commandements de Mgr. l'archevêque de Paris, et chez tous les supérieurs des communautés, même celle de Saint Lazare, août, 1789.

A burlesque confession of Charles, comte d'Artois, who, in his later life, was particularly devout in the practice of Roman Catholicism. Like *La ligue aristocratique*, this pamphlet is full of sexual imputations against members of the royal family and leading courtiers, especially the "exécrable Polignac", meaning Mme de Polignac, who is said to have had a lesbian relationship with the Queen as well as a sexual relationship with the comte, brother of the King. "Nous avons formé par cette intime réunion le plus affreux trio" (p. 23). This kind of gutter gossip shows how, in the cities at least, the pamphlets could lower public respect for the crown.

Essais historiques sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette d'Autriche, reine de France; pour servir à l'histoire de cette princesse. Londres, 1789.

A book of libels on the Queen and her circle. The place of publication, given as London, is almost certainly false.

De Droiture, avocat (pseudonym of Pierre-Mathieu Parein, 1755-1831). *Extrait du charnier des innocens, ou, Cri d'un plébéien immolé.* [Bordeaux, 1789]

An attack on the *lieutenant criminel* at the Châtelet of Paris. It is bound with a further *Supplément* denouncing the malpractice of the Paris *parlement* and can be taken as an example of the growing suspicion of members of the Ancien Regime system of policing and justice.

Lettre sur le droit d'aînesse, à Messieurs les députés de la nation, assemblés à Versailles, en 1789. Marseille: Imprimerie de Jean Mossy, 1789.

A provincial attack, by L. D., on the privileged position of the eldest male in inheritance law as it affected nobles. The author argues that the primogeniture provisions cause disunion among brothers and that the younger siblings take no interest in family affairs because they will receive only partial recompense for their efforts.

L'Aristocratie enchaînée et surveillée par le roi et par le peuple. 2e éd. Premier cahier, contenant un plan de constitution des provinces, suivie d'un mémoire de MM. les barons nés des États de Languedoc, & la réponse à leurs prétensions, par M.J.L.G.S. [Paris] 1^{re} mars 1789.

After a general warning against the pretensions of the great nobles in France to keep a highly privileged position in society, the author takes up the issue of the favoured place of the hereditary barons of Languedoc in the assembly of that province of southern France, and calls for them to admit other *gentilshommes* - meaning lesser nobles, who are worthy of respect and confidence.

Procès du clergé, de la noblesse et du ministère de France, octobre 1789. [S.l., 1789]

In this diatribe against the ecclesiastical and military nobility whose privileges are stained with blood, imposture and rapine, the author, M. de B., exclaims that it is humiliating indeed to witness the "*considération*" by which the descendants of these brigands are honoured. He asks rhetorically "Jusqu'à quand respecterons-nous des titres qui ne rappellent que des atrocités impunies?" (p. [1]). On 19 June 1790, in fact, all titles would be abolished.

Gabriel-Honoré de Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791). *Lettre de M. le comte de Mirabeau, à M. le comte d'Antraigues.* [Paris? 1789?]

A manuscript note at the foot of the first page says that this is not by the famous orator, but uses his name in order to be read and so cover the expenses of printing. The text accuses d'Antraigues of having paid a teacher to write his most famous pamphlet for him, and of being inconsistent in his opinions. The claim is also made that Antraigues is not a descendant of the house of Antraigues.

CASE FIVE: PUBLIC DEBATE AND THE PERIODICAL PRESS

NEWSPAPERS

Journal des États généraux, à commencer du 27 mai [sic] 1789, jour de leur ouverture. [S.l.] 1789.

This bound volume starts on 4 May 1789 with a description of the royal Mass, and contains reports until 11 July 1789. The debates are reported briefly.

[François de Bonnavay, marquis] (1750-1825). *Prospectus d'un nouveau journal*. [Paris] 1789.

Journal des États-généraux, ou Assemblée nationale: avis du rédacteur. [Paris]: Imprimerie de Demonville [1789]

This points out that the *Journal* is the only one that gives an exact account of all the debates, decrees and speeches made at the "National Assembly", and that the collection will be the most valuable of all. One issue appears each morning, and costs 8 liv. in Paris, and 8 liv. 10 sous free of postage in the provinces. The editor was Le Hodey de Saultchevreuil.

Le Point du jour, ou, Résultat de ce qui s'est passé la veille à l'Assemblée nationale. no 1-40 (19 juin-2 août 1789) [Paris]: Imprimerie de Ballard.

Another newspaper that started to cash in on the interest in the debates at the Assembly. It began coverage with Friday 19 June 1789 and was edited by Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac, a lawyer and deputy from southwestern France.

Révolutions de Paris, dédiées à la Nation ... Paris: Imprimerie de Laporte, 1789.

One of the most widely read newspapers of the early Revolution. It was a weekly and included coarse line engravings of major events. According to Camille Desmoulins at its height it had 200,000 subscribers but this has been questioned by modern historians. Publication ended after 225 issues on 10

Ventôse an II (28 February 1794). The epigraph of this newspaper was a celebrated example of the sentiment expressed in many others:

Les grands ne nous paroissent grands,
Que parce que nous sommes à genoux....

....Levons-nous.

A number of enthusiastic supporters of the Revolution wrote for the newspaper, including Loustallot, Sylvain Maréchal, Fabre d'Églantine, Sonthonax and others.

One of the deputies in the session of the National Assembly on 24 August 1789 who argued over the wording of the declaration of the Liberty of the Press was Maximilien Robespierre. The agreed-on version is given on page 41 of No. 7 of the *Révolutions de Paris*, and this would constitute clause eleven of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen:

La libre communication des pensées, et des
opinions, est un des droits les plus précieux
de l'homme; tout citoyen peut donc parler, écrire
et imprimer librement, sauf à répondre de l'abus
de cette liberté dans les cas déterminés par la loi.

The law on the press, although discussed during the following months and enacted in part, was never effective. Thus, in fact, the freedom of the press in France was almost unlimited until the advent of the Convention in 1792.

Annales parisiennes, politiques et critiques, mais véritables. Paris: Chez Knappen fils, 1789.

This appears to be a newspaper but is actually a book with half title, *Ce que l'on n'a pas su, et ce qu'il faut savoir, ou, Annales parisiennes*. It covers the "inside story" of the period 4 July to 28 August 1789.

L'Ami du peuple, ou, Le vrai citoyen, par une société de patriotes, et rédigé par M. Jourdain de St. Ferjeux. Paris: Imprimerie de L.M. Cellot.

This single issue, no. 4, of 20 October 1789, uses the same name as the paper dominated by Marat.

Annales patriotiques et littéraires de la France, et affaires politiques de l'Europe; journal libre, par une Société d'écrivains patriotes, & dirigé par M. Mercier. Paris: Chez Buisson.

Edited by Jean-Louis Carra and Louis-Sebastien Mercier, this newspaper began coverage on Saturday, 3 October 1789.

Nicolas Bergasse (1750-1832). *Discours de M. Bergasse, sur la manière dont il convient de limiter le pouvoir législatif & le pouvoir exécutif dans une monarchie.* [Paris?] 1789.

Bergasse wrote extensively on political theory and practice throughout his long life during which he sat in various assemblies as a deputy. Here he printed privately the speech he was unable to make because of the closure of debate in the National Assembly on the vital question of the royal veto and the organisation of the legislative and executive powers. He proposed two chambers composed of different deputies. The King had to approve laws for them to enter into force. As a moderate and a royalist he wanted to limit radical innovations.

CASE SIX: MOMENTS OF CRISIS IN 1789

If the establishment of a National Constituent Assembly was the greatest achievement of 1789 for the liberal and politically educated minority of Frenchmen, there was also a growing sense of the resistance of the privileged. On 14 July 1789 the attack on the great state prison in Paris called the Bastille, subsequently demolished, introduced a new element into politics, that of violence by the populace.

JULY 1789

Ultimatum d'un citoyen du Tiers-État au Mémoire des princes, présenté au roi. 2e éd., suivie du fin mot d'un Marseillois. [S.l.] 1789.

The author takes issue with those princes of the blood who called upon the King to hold firm against deliberation in common with the Third Estate. He points out that in fact they only represent part of the viewpoint of the royal entourage, since the King's eldest brother and others are not signatories. He calls for protection of the rights of the Third Estate and the implementation of Necker's reforming plans, and makes a clear bid for a union of Louis XVI and the Third Estate: "notre bonheur sera l'ouvrage de Louis, d'Antoinette & de Necker" (p. 67).

Paul Nairac (1732-1812?). *Copie fidelle de la lettre de M. Nairac, député aux États-généraux, datée de Versailles, le mercredi, 15 juillet 1789, à 4 heures du soir, adressée à M. E. Nairac. Bordeaux, 18 juillet 1789.*

This was printed quickly to make known in Bordeaux that Louis XVI had ordered troops to fall back from the Paris region, and also contains the statement that the National Assembly would never permit national bankruptcy. It is an example of private initiative by the family of a deputy to make known news of public concern.

M. de Villedeuil. *Lettre de M. de Villedeuil, à MM. les maire & jurats de Bordeaux, avec le Discours du Roi à la séance tenue par Sa Majesté, le 15 juillet 1789. Bordeaux: Chez Michel Racle, 1789.*

Another transmission of news that the military menace to the Revolution has ended. It calls upon the municipal officials of the port of Bordeaux "que vous en répandiez des imprimés avec profusion" (p. [3]).

Jacques Delavigne (1743-1824). *Discours au Roi, prononcé à l'arrivée de Sa Majesté à Paris, à la Barrière de la Conférence, le 17 juillet 1789. [S.l., 1789]*

This speech of welcome to the King as he entered the capital underlined the importance of the capture of the Bastille by asking Louis XVI to make July 14 "une Fête Nationale". (The first celebration of July 14 as a national holiday took place at the Place de la Nation in 1880).

[Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli] (1721-1803). *La capitale délivrée par elle-même*. Paris: Chez Maradan [1789]

This celebrates the end to the menace of invasion of Paris by royal troops thanks to the fall of the Bastille. The end of the King's resistance to the development of the Revolution is praised: "le Roi triomphe, la Nation triomphe; la félicité du Peuple étant la victoire d'un bon Roi" (p. 15).

OCTOBER 1789

The October Days were marked by the attack on the Versailles palace by part of the Parisian populace and the forced move of the royal family and of the National Assembly to Paris.

France. Assemblée nationale constituante (1789-1791). *Projet de loi concernant les attroupemens. Du 14 octobre 1789*. [Paris? 1789]

A sign of the alarm of the elected members of the National Assembly at the irruption of popular violence into the political process. The author emphasises the need for law and order in the capital now that the National Assembly is deliberating there, and lays down punishments, including death, for rioters.

La Nouvelle conjuration découverte, avec la liste des conjurés. [Paris]: S'imprime rue Mazarine, chez Madame de Bissy, octobre 1789.

A sensationalist pamphlet, accusing the privileged of a plot to "réduire le peuple par le famine" and to "souffler le feu de la discorde dans tous les coeurs" (p. 4). Those named include Mme de Bissy, the marquis de Nesle, the abbé Douglas and others, all said to be in the Abbaye prisons, and guilty of "lèze-nation". The pamphlet calls for their trial to be carried out in public.

Relation de l'assassinat commis en la personne du sieur François, maître boulanger, rue du Marché-Palu, le 21 octobre 1789. [Paris]: Imprimerie de Lottin l'aîné, & Lottin de St. Germain, 1789.

The reaction of municipal officials appalled by the lynching of a master baker. Although they observed that citizens who knew him said that he had "bien mérité du public", various women and some men had accused him of having hidden part of the bread he baked. This rumour resulted in his being dragged to the city hall, the officials who tried to save his being roughed up, and the baker being hanged from a lamp-post. Significantly the General Assembly of the Representatives of the Paris Commune ordered the printing of the procès-verbal in order in order to raise alarm about growing violence.

Rendez-nous la Bastille. [Paris]: Hotel de la Mairie [1789]

This pamphlet of circa November 1789 is "black" propaganda. Thus at first sight it apparently is the serious work of reactionaries, argued in a plausible style, that the Revolution has gone too far, that the violence of the populace is out of hand, and that absolutism should be brought back, especially its symbolic representation in the capital, the fortress-prison of the Bastille. The intent of the author is the opposite one to that enunciated in the text, and the reader is meant to be warned against moderatism which will turn back the clock.

CASE SEVEN: THEATRE AND DIALOGUES

The theatre was recognised as an important influence and mirror of public opinion on politics by the end of the eighteenth century. In the pre-revolutionary period no play had shown this better than Beaumarchais' *La folle journée, ou, Le mariage de Figaro*. Louis XVI had perceived the implicit criticism of the social hierarchy of the Old Regime and let it be known that those who put the play on in 1783 would incur his displeasure. The result was that the play was a smash hit.

In 1789 the ground was well prepared for the production of plays with indirect or direct allusions to the political changes in progress. The most successful play of the Year of Liberty was *Charles IX*, the work of Marie-Joseph de Chénier, as he is named on the title page, with the characteristic use of the

particle in his family name to give it a "classy" ring. Caron de Beaumarchais did the same thing.

Marie-Joseph Chénier (1764-1811). *Charles IX, ou, L'école des rois, tragédie*. Paris: Imprimerie de P. Fr. Didot jeune, Chez Bossange, 1790.

Approved for inclusion in the repertory by the actors of the Comédie Française in September 1788, *Charles IX* was subsequently banned by the royal censor, Suard. During 1789 various patriots agitated for a reversal of the prohibition. The King, members of the clergy and conservatives were opposed to a play which criticised a weak king. Leading actors of the Company now refused to play the part of Charles IX in the event of a performance and the part went by default to a young actor, Talma, who was destined to become one of the greatest tragedians of the French stage. On 4 November 1789 the controversial play was staged at Théâtre de la Nation, as the Comédie Française was then known. Talma was a huge success in the title role. Danton is said to have remarked that if *Figaro* killed the aristocracy, *Charles IX* will kill the royalty. Given the controversy that surrounded its arrival on the stage it is not surprising that Chénier, the author, added a preface in which he pointed out that only the new conditions permitted him to put before the public this drama about the massacre of Protestants during the night of 24 August in 1572 instigated by Catherine de Medicis and the Guises. "J'ai conçu, j'ai exécuté avant la révolution, une tragédie que la révolution seule pouvoit faire représenter" (p. 4). Chénier also expressed the hope that the theatre would instruct and uplift the public: "Le théâtre est d'une influence immense sur les mœurs générales. Il fut long-temps une école d'adulation, de fadeur et de libertinage; il faut en faire une école de vertu & de liberté" (p. 7).

Carbon de Flins des Oliviers (1757-1806). *Le réveil d'Épiménide à Paris, comédie*. Paris: Chez Maradan, 1790.

Written in 1789 and performed on New Year's Day 1790, this play exemplifies the optimism about the future which many felt at the time. Using a "Rip Van Winkle" device already used in the French theatre in 1735 and 1755, the author has his character, who never dies but who sleeps for a century at a time, awaken to compare society under Louis XIV with France in 1789. Absolutist France is unfavourably contrasted with the nation reformed under Louis XVI. Talma played one of the characters, d'Harcourt. The public applauded the many compliments to the King, and the play was highly successful.

L'Assemblée, drame en un acte, et une scène. [Paris? 1789?]

A manuscript note on the first page calls this a 1789 pamphlet which is moderately royalist in tone. Whether this was ever performed or who the author was is uncertain, but it shows the fondness in the eighteenth century for the dialogue form in the expression of ideas. The text points to the union of the king, the nobility and the common people in accepting necessary reforms of taxation and an end to pecuniary privileges, but lambastes "le prétendu Tiers-État". By this is meant, in the King's words, "ceux de mes Sujets qui veulent cesser de l'être, & qui veulent fonder un nouvel Empire, qui n'écoutent que les écarts de leur imagination, qui croient possible de mettre en pratique de prétendues vérités philosophiques, qui ne savent pas mettre une ligne de démarcation raisonnable à leurs spéculations ..." (p. 37).

CASE EIGHT: THE GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS OF 1789

No single document better represents the principles of 1789 than the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. This was a codification of fundamental rights of freedom as understood by liberals at the end of the eighteenth century. This codification preceded by a month the United States Bill of Rights. It was to be incorporated as a preface to the Constitution of 1791. It was, with modifications, to appear in many subsequent constitutions of France. Although unlike the constitutional practice of British and Canadian parliamentary monarchy, it may be seen as an example of the tradition which led to the enactment of the Canadian Bill of Rights.

Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès (1748-1836). *Préliminaire de la constitution.*

Reconnaissance et exposition raisonnée des droits de l'homme et du citoyen.

Versailles: Imprimerie de Ph.-D. Pierres, juillet 1789.

The abbé Sieyès had played a vital part in the pamphlet campaign, and was also one of the most influential figures in ideas as to how the French constitution should be cast. This pamphlet shows how his views were made public and contributed to debate.

Examen de la déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen, ou, Observations sommaires sur la déclaration ... Paris: Imprimerie d'un royaliste [1789]

This is representative of attacks by conservatives who felt that the declaration went too far in its abstract insistence on rights. The author calls himself "un ami de l'homme et de la vraie liberté"; the motto on the title page gives a clue to his outlook: "Quand Dieu a résolu la ruine d'un Homme, il commence par lui ôter la raison".

Suite des Nouvelles de Versailles, du 5 août 1789, publiées le 6, à cinq heures du matin. [Paris, 1789]

These flimsy sheets show how news was spread of the renunciation of privileges by the nobility and others during the late session of the National Assembly which went on from seven until two in the morning on 4 August 1789. "Par un coup inattendu, même dans la journée d'hier, la Noblesse & le Clergé se sont désaisis unanimement, & à l'envi l'un de l'autre de leurs droits directs, même d'une partie de leurs prérogatives, à des conditions avouées par la raison, et veulent qu'à l'avenir la justice soit rendue *gratis*" (p. 2).

France. Comité de Constitution. *Rapport du Comité de constitution, sur l'organisation du pouvoir judiciaire, présenté à l'Assemblée nationale, par M. [Nicolas] Bergasse ... Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1789.*

France. Comité de Constitution. *Rapport du nouveau Comité de constitution, fait à l'Assemblée nationale, le mardi 29 septembre 1789. Sur l'établissement des bases de la représentation personnelle. Versailles: Chez Baudouin, 1789.*

France. Comité des Finances. *Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale au nom du Comité des finances, par M. le marquis de Montesquiou; le 18 novembre 1789. Paris: Chez Baudouin, [1789]*

France. Comité ecclésiastique. *Rapport fait au nom du Comité ecclésiastique, le jeudi 17 décembre 1789, sur les ordres religieux, par M. [Jean-Baptiste] Treilhard. Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1789.*

These publications represent the intense debate in the National Assembly and the enunciation of new ideas of how the government of France should be reorganised. The four reports deal with very difficult matters. The costs of these

government publications were carried by the Assembly and they are perhaps not, strictly speaking, pamphlets in the sense of contributions to public opinion. They represented, however, a level of openness and made available statements on issues of public concern unprecedented in the France of the old monarchy.

[Jean-Antoine-Nicolas de Caritat, marquis de Condorcet] (1743-1794). *Réflexions sur ce qui a été fait, et sur ce qui reste à faire*. Paris: Chez Baudouin, 1789.

This anonymous pamphlet by Condorcet, the mathematician and theorist of social science, a man often described as the last of the *philosophes*, shows the concern already felt in 1789 by some at the way in which political violence and terrorism had overtaken the resolution of political deadlock through debate. He decries "la fausse opinion que le Peuple a prise de ses droits, en imaginant que la volonté tumultueuse des Habitans d'une Ville, d'un Bourg, d'un Village et même d'un Quartier, est une espèce de Loi, et que la volonté du Peuple, de quelque manière qu'elle se manifeste, a la même autorité qu'une volonté exprimée suivant une forme prescrite par une Loi reconnue" (p. 19). Condorcet committed suicide while awaiting execution in 1794.

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